

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

# Minneapolis Workforce Council

Cedar Riverside Listening Session  
Update

# City of Minneapolis Employment and Training

- 25+ years of funding community-based network of employment service providers throughout Minneapolis
- Model allows the City of Minneapolis to be more responsive to community need by partnering with existing community agencies – leveraging partners community knowledge and local economic/social relationships
- Currently working with 15 community-based agencies + more during summer via STEP-UP



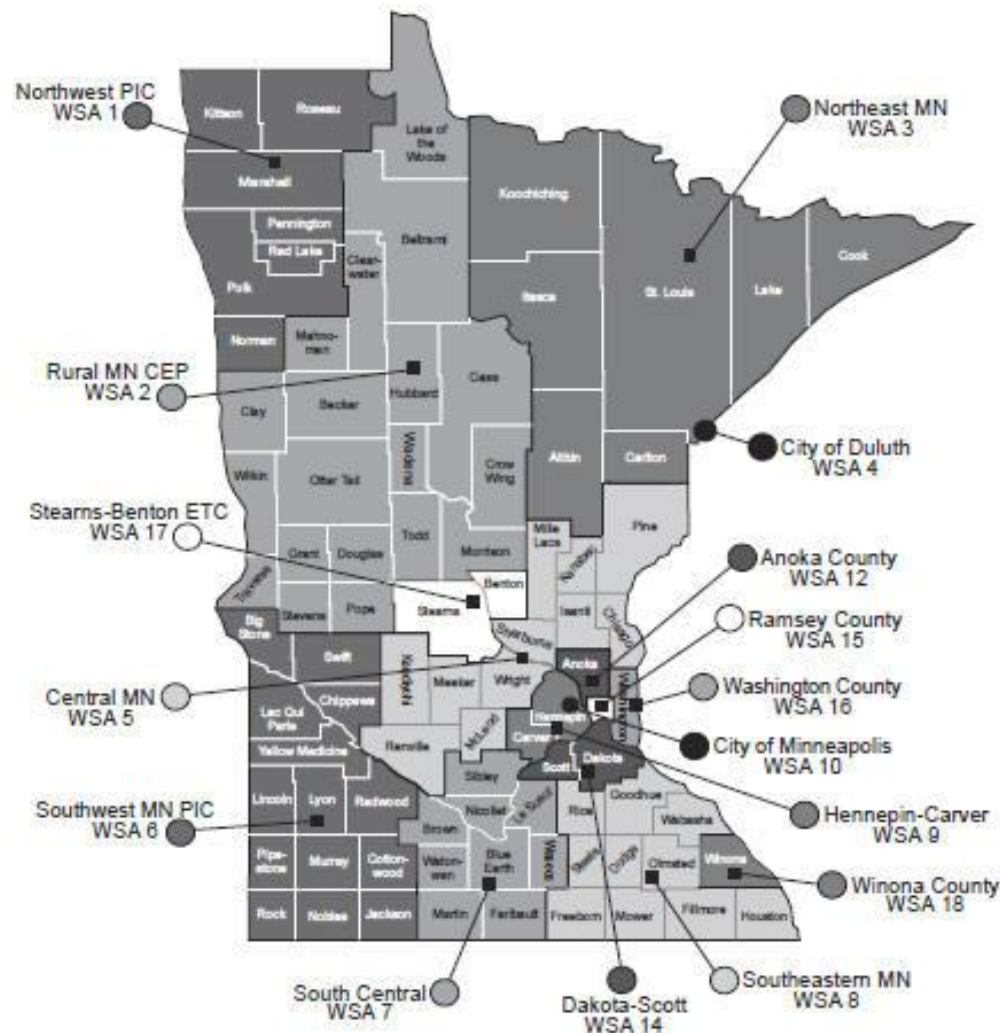
# Oversight

- The Minneapolis Workforce Council provides oversight and leadership to the work of Minneapolis Employment and Training
- Council mandated by the federal government
  - 19 member board
  - Private-sector led
- Oversees budget, made up of federal, state, and local sources



# Regional Cooperation

- City of Minneapolis Employment and Training is part of the regional Greater Metro Workforce Council and the statewide association of 16 other Workforce Service Areas.



# Workforce Development Priority Areas

- Services to Youth
  - Minneapolis Youth Works
  - STEP-UP
- Services to Adults
  - Minneapolis Works
  - Train to Career
  - Dislocated Worker
- Service to Businesses
  - Business Consulting
  - Minneapolis Outreach and Recruiting



# What we heard

## Issues:

### Youth

- Youth lack skills and resources.
- Youth entrepreneur opportunities like the Brian Coyle coffee shop and Sisterhood of the Traveling Scarf are working.
- How can we find employment for students?
- Youth unemployment can be addressed with a strong connection between the City and the community.
- Train youth how to promote themselves in interviews.
- There is a level of hopelessness among our youth.
- Emerging Workforce organization is working with Summit Academy which provides scholarships for youth but more is needed.
- Ka Joog helps youth with job applications, etc. but is not a comprehensive employment program.

### Adult

- Adults need jobs too. Young people, ages 21 up, have aged out of quality programs putting them at risk.
- No experienced employment and training provider is teaching employment skills for young adults.

# What we heard continued...

- **General**

- Transportation and language barriers are issues.
- There is a need for organizations that focus on employment in Cedar Riverside.
- There are restrictions as to who can qualify for programs.
- There is a 75% unemployment rate for 18-24 year olds.
- People don't have brushed-up resumes.
- Offer trainings in the neighborhood. Help with resumes.
- Do mock interviews in Cedar Riverside.
- Don't stop the conversation here.
- The City should visit the neighborhood more.
- Inform organizations how to become an employment and training provider.
- City job fairs don't turn out too many times. People apply and don't get hired.
- Somali organizations aren't supported. No Somali organization is funded by the City.
- Help support Somali organizations.
- Don't help us; give us a share of the pie.
- Treat us as partners.
- Help emerging Somali organizations build capacity.
- Chronic unemployment.
- There are assets here who want to be part of the solution.
- One can find unhappiness with the City in any neighborhood.
- Tap into people in the neighborhood who have been successful.
- Word-of-mouth is a way to get people involved with people who are already doing the work.
- Applying on-line is a big challenge.

- Misalignment of resources.
- Data issues. How to collect data. DEED?
- An educated Somali will not get a job.
- The problem isn't here. It's the larger structure.
- How do we have a larger/permanent larger workforce development center in the Cedar-Riverside area?
- How can we mitigate the 75% unemployment rate within the youth 18 – 25 year old age demographic in the Cedar-Riverside area?
- What can we do at a larger level to promote the Minneapolis Workforce Council to help make an impact with the Somali Cedar-Riverside Community?
- How can we build HOPE in the Cedar-Riverside Community?
- How can we assist youth with obtaining an e-mail, resume making, cover letters, interviewing techniques and employment skills/job readiness?
- How to stop employment discrimination because of Somali religion?
- Lack of mentors and role models in Cedar-Riverside Community
- How to get resident's out of their homes and letting them know there will be a difference in the Cedar-Riverside Community
- How can corporations and organizations that have job openings partner with the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota (CSCM), Brian Coyle Community Center to share employment and skills information for the youth.
- How can we assist men, women and youth in the Cedar-Riverside Community with gaining employment?
- How to assist with truck driving and dispatching positions for the Somali culture?
- How to teach managers, supervisors and employees about conflict resolution in the work place?
- How to obtain funding for training?
- How to partner with the community?
- How can Cedar-Riverside obtain more resources for the community?
- How can you assist with the worst Somali disparities and health care in the country?

# Potential Solutions

## Youth/STEP-UP

- STEP-UP should provide cultural sensitivity training for its employers.
- STEP-UP mock interviews should tap into Somali professionals.
- STEP-UP jobs in the community.
- Fairview could take all their STEP-UP students from Cedar Riverside. Then invest in them with follow-through, make sure that they are connected. Cohort group.
- Grants for volunteer time.
- Make sure youth know what documents are required when applying for jobs.
- Organizations in Cedar Riverside can host STEP-UP interns.
- Staff at the Coyle Center help kids apply to STEP-UP, Team Teamworks and Streetworks, but more help is needed.
- Job Corps (ages 16-24) provides academic completion, soft skills, and trade training and certification. 75% graduate and 90% become employed.
- Provide expungement info and resources for youth. Volunteer Lawyers.
- Engage Urban Scholars to recruit more Somali young adults.
- Provide internship opportunities throughout the year.
- Unsubsidized/private sector jobs are needed.
- Assess skills of young people.
- Emphasize the importance of networking to youth.
- Get the message out to the community about the upcoming Teen Job Fair.



# Potential Solutions

## Adult

- A center in the neighborhood where people can go for jobs, counseling and interpreters.
- Educate employers to the talent here.
- The City must be ambassadors and ask employers to commit to hire.
- Need supportive services to help people go to school and vocational training so they can support their families. Transportation is one.
- Provide information to the community about what industries are hiring.
- City, MPHA, MPRB need to hire Somalis to reflect the community.
- Access to the City of Minneapolis Job Bulletin is a resource community members can register for to obtain employment opportunities.



# Potential Solutions

- **General**
- Attend Somali Independence Day Festival (TBA) to learn more about the community.
- Encourage entrepreneurship.
- Revisit the existing programs that the City of Minneapolis Employment and Training offers.
- Provide cultural context on the City of Minneapolis website.
- Having current City of Minneapolis employees and other businesses in Minneapolis voice their comments regards to working with Somali's or individuals in the Somali community.
- Provide language and skilled training for Somali residents who reside in the Cedar-Riverside or Phillips Community.
- Have a Somali on the Minneapolis Workforce Council.
- Teach individuals how to be more culturally sensitive towards different race.
- Empower Somali American institutions and organizations.

# Strategies to pursue

## Short-term Strategies

- Detailed mapping of resources currently available in 55454
  - Coordinate with Youth Coordinating Board's mapping efforts
- Focus DEED's outreach strategies towards Cedar-Riverside
- Better communication of opportunity and access points existing within the community
  - Utilize oral tradition within community
  - Build a "success" narrative
  - Build a "hope and opportunity" narrative
- Make connections with Imams within the Somali community, in Cedar-Riverside and beyond
- Develop a youth employment pilot project
- Organize two job/hiring events
  - Recruit both youth and adults
  - Transportation careers
- Create and present more career awareness events

## Mid- to Long-term Strategies

- Focus both on Cedar-Riverside and larger City-wide Somali community
- Create an Adult Services Coordination Committee
- Build industry awareness in various industry sectors, open more career opportunities for Cedar-Riverside residents
- Increase digital literacy
- Create more OJT opportunities for young adults and unemployed adults
- Connect to labor unions
- Find avenues of recruitment to City of Minneapolis employment/Henn. Co./Mpls Parks

# Action taken and upcoming opportunities

1. DEED workforce center staff brought their *Employment Ready Youth* training to Cedar Riverside in mid-April, five nights worth of training
2. Minneapolis Youth Works RFP is currently live
3. Scrubs Camps (July)
4. March 30<sup>th</sup> Cedar Riverside Job Fair
5. DEED community outreach
6. IT-Ready Cedar Riverside young adult focus training (fall)
7. 3 new Cedar Riverside STEP-UP employers this year at the Discover level: Riverside Plaza Tenant Association, Somali American Parent Association and West Bank Community Coalition.
8. Ka Joog is hiring a STEP-UP Achieve intern
9. 111 youth from the zip code 55454 applied to STEP-UP
10. 637 youth who applied to STEP-UP self-identified that either they or one of their parents was born in Somalia (19%).
11. 416 Somali youth completed STEP-UP training (65%).
12. School year internships: STEP-UP Achieve had 115 in the 2013/14 school year.